

Message Text

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TO USINT HAVANA

INFO AMEMBASSY KIGALI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 082992

FOLLOWING REPEAT KIGALI 464 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
BRUSSELS, BUJUMBURA, KINSHASA, AND PARIS DATED MAR 23, 1978.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 464

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, MARR, CU, UR, RW

SUBJECT: RWANDAN WORRIES OVER SOVIETS, CUBANS

REF KIGALI 447

1. WITHOUT GOING INTO ALL DETAILS REPORTED REFTEL, I
COMPARED NOTES THIS AFTERNOON WITH MY BELGIAN AND FRENCH
COLLEAGUES AND LEARNED THE FOLLOWING:

A. BELGIAN AMBASSADOR VAN CROMBRUGGE APPEARED TO
HAVE NO RPT NO INFORM CORROBORATING NSEKALIJE'S ASSERTION
THAT CUBANS WERE INAUGURATING MILITARY ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM IN BURUNDI (REFTEL). MEANWHILE, HIS CONTINUING
DIFFICULTIES WITH RWANDANS OVER GOB MILITARY ASSISTANCE
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PROGRAM HERE (INHOSPITABLE TREATMENT OF SENIOR BELGIAN
MILITARY OFFICIALS, REFUSAL TO ACCEPT USED OR OBSOLESCENT
MILITARY EQUIPMENT OFFERED FREE) PERSUADE HIM GOR REALLY
DOESN'T WANT WESTERN MILITARY HELP. HOWEVER, BELGIAN
SHARES FONMIN'S CONCERNS ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF CUBAN
PRESENCE IN BUJUMBURA FOR ZAIRIAN SECURITY.

COMMENT: BELGIAN AMB'S RELATIONS WITH RWANDAN MILITARY HAVE GONE FROM BAD TO WORSE IN RECENT MONTHS. HE BELIEVES SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE UPPER HAND WITH PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA AND ARE CALLING ALL SHOTS ON DEFENSE MATTERS, WITH PREFERENCE GOING TO INCREASED LIBYAN TIES AND SUPPLIES (TO BELGIAN'S CHAGRIN). AS HE SEES IT, NSEKALIJE IS CHIEF VILLAIN IN OFFICER GROUP. I DO NOT RPT NOT AGREE WITH VAN CROMBRUGGE'S ASSESSMENT.

B. FRENCH AMB MAINERE (WHO HAD ALREADY TOLD ME HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE) SAID HE, TOO, HAD BEEN GIVEN MESSAGE YESTERDAY -- IN HIS CASE, BY HABYARIMANA HIMSELF -- THAT GOR EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT INCREASED SOVIET/CUBAN ACTIVITY IN BURUNDI AND (IN SAME BREATH) UNHAPPY AT FRANCE'S RELUCTANCE TO AUGMENT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO RWANDA. HABYARIMANA TOLD HIM WESTERN COUNTRIES WERE LEAVING RWANDA TO "FACE THE WOLF" UNPROTECTED. MANIERE BELIEVES PRESIDENT UNDER STRONG MILITARY PRESSURE TO SHOW BENEFITS OF WESTERN TIES OR ELSE SHIFT ALIGNMENT TOWARD SOVIETS.

COMMENT: FRENCH AMG'S STOCK HAS RISEN AS STEADILY AS BELGIAN'S HAS FALLEN, IN PART THANKS TO RECENT DONATION OF THREE PLANELOADS (727'S) OF OUTDATED FRENCH MILITARY HARDWARE TO RWANDA -- PRE-WWII MACHINE GUNS, ETC. -- WHICH COST FRANCE 1:3 MILLION FF IN TRANSPORT CHARGES
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BUT NEXT TO NOTHING FOR MATERIAL ITSELF. MANIERE IS ALSO RUGENTLY SEEKING AN ECONOMIC AID "TOKEN" OF FRANCE'S CONCERN TO ASSUAGE HABYARIMANA, ALTHOUGH FRENCH AID LEVELS ARE IN FACT ALREADY SUBSTANTIAL.

2. IF FOREGOING PROVES ANYTHING, IT IS MERELY THAT FRANCE IS HAPPY TO FILL BELGIUM'S FALTERING LEADERSHIP ROLE IN RWANDA IF IT CAN DO SO CHEAPLY.
CRIGLER UNQUOTE COOPER

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